Mary & Martha

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In the little village of Bethany which nestled amid olive trees on the eastern slope of the Mount of Olives and overlooked the deep valley descending into the Jordan plain lived Martha and Mary with their brother Lazarus. The three were not only most intimate friends of Jesus but their home during his entire Judean ministry was Christ's favorite haven of rest and place of refuge. Here Jesus preferred to stay at night rather than in the large city Jesuralem. Here Mary and Martha in frequent and familiar association with the Master became inspired with his divine personality and learned to love him ~~personally~~ tenderly as their savior and friend.

Martha and Mary, or rather, Mary and Martha. The one is never thot of apart from the other, and the two are always contrasted with each other. Martha is ~~always~~ ever represented as a back-ground against which the ideal character and love of Mary is made to shine forth the more strikingly. Martha was absorbed in her household duties while Mary sat at the feet of Jesus; Martha was prosaic and matter-of-fact but Mary was an idealist and poetic lover. Friends did not hang about Martha as they did about Mary whose personal charm was irresistable and whose intuition and tact were amazing. It was always Mary who knew how to do just the right thing in just the right way at just the right time. Martha made mistakes, and consequently had to be corrected, even by her most beloved friend Jesus-and on a public occasion at that! So runs the average estimate of the two sisters. ~~A Careful study of the Gospel records But such~~ and interpretation of Mary and Martha is not only superficial but ~~altogether~~ false. and unjust. Must Niagara Falls be depreciated in order to set forth the grandeur and beauty of Yosemite Falls? Must the Yosemite Valley be belittled in order to appreciate fully the Grand Canyon of the Colorado? It is not only unfair to the subjects so treated but is belittling to ourselves so to treat them. Martha and Mary are truly different in their natures and dispositions, which differences I fully appreciate, but Martha in her way loved Jesus just as sincerely and trusted him just as implicitly as did Mary. And furthermore, Jesus loved the two sisters alike, wholeheartedly and unreservedly. When it comes to either to depth or strength of character Martha needs no Mary in order to win our admiration nor can a Mary make us blind to the merits of her common-sensed mind, her staunch faith or her dependable practical service. With prejudice swept aside, let us to our subject in hand-Martha, the fourth point of the Eastern Star.

The test of character is conduct in the hour of emergency, in the moment of crisis. When the brother Lazarus took sick and died, Mary, completely overcome with grief, sat in the house with friends who had come from Jesuradem to sympathize. It was Martha who took charge of the situation, making the necessary burial arrangements, and tending to the house and preparing the necessary meals. Such an one in time of need is a veritable blessing. And when it was announced that Jesus was coming, Mary remained sitting in the house-perhaps completely taken up with her own sorrow, while Martha went out to meet him, none the less sorrowful but able in crisal moment to think of others.

When Martha met Jesus, alone, she did not fall at his feet in utter despair as did Mary; nor was it with heart-breaking hopelessness that she said,"Lord, if thou hadst been here my Brother had not died", for she immediately added to it,"And even now I know that, whatsoever thou shalt ask of God, God will give thee." No finer display of unfaltering faith can be found in all history than that of Martha as she stands before Jesus and sees in him further help from God, even when her practical mind tells her that her brother having beenndead four days and buried four days is beyond qhysical resurrection.

The faith of Martha drew from the lips of Jesus the world's most comforting words; "I am the Resurrection and the Life: he that believeth on me, tho he die, yet shall he live; and whosoever liveth and believeth on me shall never die!" To one who thus believes and lives death has no terror nor resurrection no mystery.because they cannot interrupt the life of Spirit. He who lives in Christ has eternal life now, with the promise that death and resurrection will but free him for further growth and progress.in whatever hereafter God has in store for him. After uttering this epochal truth Jesus

After uttering this epochal truth Jesus asks Martha the question,"Believest thou this?" Strengthened in her faith by the presence and assurance the Master Martha answers,"Yes Lord, I believe that thou art the Christ, the Son of God, who has come into the world." Most precious Point of the Easteen Star! May it be to every member of the Order, in the words of Susan Coolidge:

"A song of sunshine thru the rain,
Of spring across the snow,
A balm to heal the hurts of pain,
A peace surpassing woe"

The world will never forget Mary's tribute of love to Jesus when she washed his feet with the costly ointment and the world will always remember Christ's masterful recognition of her love. Our noble sentiment will perpetuate its memory. But the world can never forget the sublime faith of Martha in Jesus Christ when death had darkened her hearrt, nor can the world cease to remember Christ's immortal words in response to her faith, words that for every believer mean victory over death and triumphal entry into Life Eternal.